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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 001878

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/07/2029  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PROP](#) [CH](#)  
SUBJECT: UNREST CONTINUES IN URUMQI, COUNTER DEMONSTRATION  
BY HAN CHINESE, OFFICIAL DEATH TOLL AT 156

REF: BEIJING 1876

Classified By: Acting Political Section Chief  
Ben Moeling. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY  
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¶1. (C) During a third day of unrest in Urumqi, large numbers of rioters of Han nationality engaged in counter protests directed at Uighur residents and businesses. According to a U.S. Embassy officer in Urumqi, as of 1800 local time, unrest, including explosions and the use of tear gas by police, continued. Urumqi-based American citizens contacted by the Embassy July 7 reported they were safe and staying indoors. Post sent a letter to the Xinjiang Foreign Affairs Office (FAO) July 6 requesting information on whether any Amcits had been injured or detained, but has received no response. Phones rang unanswered at the Xinjiang FAO for the second day. Late in the evening on July 6, MFA called in the Charge to provide an official description of the events; that description was identical to the account provided by State media outlet Xinhua. The official death toll now stands at 156 and authorities report making 1434 arrests. End Summary

DEATH TOLL AT 156, OVER 1000 INJURED  
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¶2. (U) Xinhua News Agency revised the death toll to 156, a figure which remained steady during the morning and afternoon of July 7. Xinhua reported that over 1000 had been injured and 1434 had been arrested.

PARTY SECRETARY BLAMES REBIYA KADEER  
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¶3. (U) After midnight July 7, Xinhua News Agency published a statement by Xinjiang Communist Party Secretary Wang Lequan stating that Rebiya Kadeer and the World Uighur Congress were behind the riots. Chinese media outlets gave heavy coverage to official assertions that Kadeer and exile Uighur groups orchestrated the violence.

¶4. (C) In Urumqi, PolOff reported a reduced police and PAP presence the morning of July 7 compared to the previous day. Several Urumqi residents told PolOff that work units and businesses had ordered employees to remain home and that shops would remain closed for three days following the July 5 riot. Most businesses in Urumqi were closed July 7, except for street stalls. A retiree told PolOff he had been told by authorities to remain home. PolOff did

not see any indicators of an official curfew, but residents reported that authorities had ordered all cars off the roads by 7pm the night of July 6.

15. (C) PolOff reported that People's Square, an epicenter of the July 5 rioting, remained closed by police. From a distance, PolOff observed police and PAP on the square. While PolOff saw approximately five personnel on People's Square who appeared to be in People's Liberation Army uniforms, all military-type vehicles observed had PAP plates.

#### HAN COUNTER DEMONSTRATION JULY 7

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16. (C) Post received reports of sporadic demonstrations in Urumqi July 7. Western journalists on a government-sponsored tour of riot damage encountered a protest of about 200 Uighurs who screamed that their husbands and children had been detained. Separately, PolOff observed a counter demonstration by Han Chinese residents in the afternoon. At 1330 he witnessed groups of young Han men massing north of People's Square. At approximately 1445, PolOff observed nearly one thousand demonstrators, mostly young Han men, near the South Gate and Jiefang North Road. Several demonstrators told PolOff they were responding to reports that many Han had died during the July 5 riots. Five bus loads of PAP troops arrived at the scene. The demonstrators, many of whom carried clubs, appeared to be marching toward a small mosque

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near the South Gate. Some attacked Uighur storefronts. At one point the demonstration appear to grow to several thousand people, some of whom broke through a blockade of PAP troops. The PAP soldiers were armed with clubs, but appeared to use restraint against the Han protestors. Starting at about 1510, PolOff heard several explosions and police began firing tear gas into the crowd. PolOff heard two additional explosions in the city at 1700. (Note: PolOff believes the explosions were likely part of the police crowd-control efforts.)

#### Two Amcits Detained Briefly, Passports Confiscated

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17. (SBU) The ACS section received reports of two Amcits, David Wong and Adam Grode, who, in separate incidents, had their passports and cameras confiscated by Urumqi police after police observed them taking photographs. The two were briefly detained and released. As of the afternoon of July 7, both were attempting to retrieve their passports and other belongings from police. In the afternoon of July 7, ACS received a call from an American citizen who reported he was in a bank when, as a result of unrest nearby, bank employees had locked the doors and instructed customers to take cover. All other Urumqi-based Amcits contacted by the Embassy July 7 reported they were safe and staying indoors as a precaution. Post sent a letter July 6 to the Xinjiang Foreign Affairs Office (FAO) requesting information on whether any Amcits were injured or detained but has received no response. Xinjiang FAO officials did not answer their phones July 6 or 7.

#### Quiet at Beijing's Nationalities University

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18. (SBU) Poloff entered the Beijing campus of Central University for Nationalities (CUN) July 7 and noticed no unusual security presence. A recent

graduate of the school, which many Uighur students attend, told PolOff that most students were away for summer vacation and the school has been quiet. (Note: CUN was the site of a sit-in demonstration by Tibetan students following the Lhasa riots in March 2008.)

Charge Receives a Late Night Demarche July 6  
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19. (C) MFA called in the Charge after 2100 July 6 to deliver a demarche formally describing the events and causes of the unrest (MFA blames outside agitators, specifically Rebiya Kadeer). See reftel. GOLDBERG